



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 7, 2007

CONTACT: Kirsten Deichert
(916) 651-0989

GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER PROCLAIMS MAY AS “MENTAL HEALTH MONTH”
Mental Health Treatment Options Multiplying Throughout California

SACRAMENTO – Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has proclaimed May 2007 as “Mental Health Month,” the California Department of Mental Health (DMH) announced today.

“I urge all Californians to promote mental wellness by showing compassion and encouragement to those who live with mental illness,” said Governor Schwarzenegger. “We must eradicate the stigma associated with these afflictions in order to help those in need.”

“The proclamation is timely because mental health issues have been on the forefront in recent weeks,” said Dr. Stephen Mayberg, director of DMH. “It’s important to remind Californians that help is available in every county, and we are fortunate that there are more mental health resources than ever before.”

Since Governor Schwarzenegger took office, total resources for the Department of Mental Health have grown from \$2.3 billion (FY 2003-04) to \$4.7 billion (proposed FY 2007-08).

And with funding from the Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63), counties are creating hundreds of new mental health programs that will provide thousands of Californians a chance at a better life. Many of these innovative programs are already up and running, such as:

- In Orange County, frail seniors now have mental health services delivered to their doorsteps by mental health workers who make home visits to address their depression or other health problems.

Continued on next page.

- In Los Angeles County, hundreds of adults with mental illness who have been homeless, hospitalized, or incarcerated are already enrolled in “full service partnership” services that provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Participants will get help with housing, social support, counseling, jobs, and healthcare they need to recover from their mental illness and live full lives.
- In Stanislaus County, a new drop-in center for young adults employs mental health consumers who help one another recover from mental health problems and maintain their wellness. "Coming to work every day, seeing kids that are still struggling reminds me that I was there once and that I was able to work through it and they can too. It helps me keep my own recovery by helping others," said Anthony Court, a 23-year old who now works at the drop-in center helping other young people.

To date, the state has distributed about a half billion dollars of Proposition 63 funding to counties. All new local programs approved for Proposition 63 funding were designed with the input of mental health consumers who will actually be using the services, as well as family members, service providers, and other interested agencies. The programs are designed to provide previously underserved populations – including the homeless, elderly and young adults – with the mental healthcare they need.

“As we review counties’ applications, we’re excited about the innovative ideas they have for helping people with housing, jobs, school, and at the same time, their mental health,” said Dr. Mayberg. “Now, these programs are coming to life and creating success stories in every county.”

Proposition 63, passed by California voters in November 2004, provides mental health funding through an additional 1 percent tax on income over \$1 million. For more information about the Mental Health Services Act, go to <http://www.dmh.ca.gov/>.

#